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ABSTRACT

Chicanos in this country have been in a constant state of struggle for economic and cultural survival; yet the Chicano's family has remained the most important part of his culture. Chicano values, customs, life styles, and language are still very much a part of his family. This publication discusses the Chicano's family, covering: (1) la familia and the role it plays in the Chicano movement today; (2) the emerging identity of La Raza today; (3) the future of La Raza amid a changing Anglo-dominated society; (4) concepts of Chicanismo, carnalismo , and compadrazgo; (5) Anglo/Chicano contrasts of familia values, perspectives of life/death, and the land; and (6) implications of future shock on la Raza. (NQ)

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LA FAMILIA DE LA RAZA

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INTRODUCTION

THE CHICANO IN THIS COUNTRY HAS BEEN IN A CONSTANT STATE OF STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL SURVIVAL. FOR HIM THERE HAS NOT BEEN THE LUXURY OF CHOOSING BETWEEN IDIOLOGIES, PHILOSOPHIES, POSTER HEROS, FADS OR MOVEMENTS. THE LUXURY OF ANY CHOICE SEEMINGLY WAS NOT INTENDED FOR CHICANOS. FOR THE CHICANO, THE ONLY THINGS WHICH WERE REAL AND THAT MATTERED WAS COPING WITH HUNGER AND INDIGNATION IN HIS FIGHT TO EXIST.

TODAY THE CLIMATE HAS CHANGED SOMEWHAT. HUNGER AND INDIGNATION ARE STILL VERY REAL TO HIM BUT A MOVEMENT FED BY THE CLIMATE OF THE TIMES IS BEGINNING TO RIPEN AND THE FRUITS OF THE MOVEMENT ARE TAKING COLOR.

THROUGHOUT AZTLAN (A SPIRITUAL BRONZE NATION IN THIS COUNTRY) THE DIMENSIONS OF THIS MOVEMENT ARE ENCOMPASSING SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND EDUCATIONAL ARENAS.

LA RAZA UNIDA PARTY (RUP) IS CURRENTLY THE STRONGEST

MOVING POLITICAL FORCE, GAINING VICTORIES AND CONTROL IN SOUTH TEXAS BARRIOS AND COMMUNITIES AND IS NOW SPREADING INTO CALIFAS, ARIZONA, NUEVO MEXICO, AND COLORADO. IT IS IMPORTANT ENOUGH SO THAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING THAT "RUP" COULD ELECT THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THE POLITICALLY ORGANIZED CHICANO CAN BE THE SWING VOTE. WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, "RUP" WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR. EMPOWERMENT OF CHICANOS IS THE GOAL--POLITICAL POWER FOR THE PURPOSE OF SELF DETERMINATION. AND, "RUP" WILL BE AROUND FOR A LONG WHILE TO SERVE THAT END.

THE ECONOMIC MOVEMENT IS DEMONSTRATED AT ITS BEST IN THE FARMWORKERS' MOVEMENT HEADED BY CEASAR CHAVEZ. THERE MUST BE ECONOMIC POWER TO BREAK THE BONDS OF SERVITUDE TO A WHITE CONTROLLED CAPITOLISTIC ECONOMIC SYSTEM. THE LEADERSHIP OF CHAVEZ HAS DEMOLISHED THE MYTHS THAT POOR PEOPLE CANNOT BE ORGANIZED. THE POOR HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR CAPACITY TO SURVIVE, ENDURE, AND TRIUMPH ONCE AGAIN. WHERE MORE THAN HALF OF OUR PEOPLE ARE FOUND TO BE BELOW POVERTY GUIDELINES, THE

MOVEMENT OF THE FARMWORKERS IS UPHEAVING AGRICULTURE BUSINESS DOMINATION OF CHICANO LIVES. INDEPENDENCE IS A GROWING LIGHT GETTING BRIGHTER FOR CHICANOS.

IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION, A NEW BREED IS EMERGING FROM THE LAND. THIS BREED IS REJECTING A STALE AND ANGLO-ORIENTED SCHOOL SYSTEM WHICH HAS ATTEMPTED TO WHITEWASH CHICANOS' MINDS AND HAVE THE "RAZA" PAY HOMAGE TO THE WHITE MANIFEST DESTINY MENTALITY FED BY MATERIALISM.

TLATELOLCO IN DENVER, UNIVERSIDAD DE AZTLAN IN FRESNO, JACINTO TREVINO IN MERCEDES, JOAQUIN MURRIETA IN MICHIGAN, ARE EXAMPLES OF THE NEW SCHOOLS WHICH ARE SPRINGING UP. THE PURPOSE: TO EQUIP CHICANOS WITH SKILLS TO NEGOTIATE A GRINGO SYSTEM AND MAINTAIN THEIR CHICANO IDENTITY--AN EDUCATION OF CHICANOS WHO IN TURN EDUCATE THEIR OWN PEOPLE.

THE MOVEMENT EXISTS AS IT DOES BECAUSE OF NEED. IT IS BEING PROPELLED THROUGH THE FORCE OF FRUSTRATION AND DETERMINATION WITH VALUES OF NATIONALISTIC CARNALISMO AND A CONCEPT OF BUILDING THAT BRONZE NATION OF AZTLAN.

BEFORE TOO LONG, HOWEVER, WE MUST FACE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS OF DEFINITION. THE FORCE OF THE FRUSTRATION AND DETERMINATION WHICH EXIST TODAY CARRYING MANY ASPECTS OF THE MOVEMENT--WILL BECOME REPLACED WITH QUESTIONS OF: WHAT NEXT? WHAT ELEMENTS WILL REPLACE AND SUSTAIN THE MOVEMENT WHEN THE HEAT OF THE WARS SUBSIDE? HOW PRACTICAL IS THE CONTINUED ADHERENCE TO NATIONALISM? MORE CRUCIAL, WHAT DO WE MEAN THEN BY CARNALISMO--THAT UNSPOKEN BOND WHICH WILL BECOME ABUSED IN THE WAVE OF THE MOVEMENT? (IN FACT, EVEN NOW, THERE IS AN AWFUL LOT OF CRAP THAT GOES ON IN THE NAME OF 'LA RAZA" AND "EL MOVIMIENTO.")

CAPITALISM: IN WHAT MODIFICATION? AZTLAN: A STATE OF MIND? OR: A NATION WITH BOUNDARIES? ACULTURATION OR BICULTURATION: WHAT CULTURAL ELEMENTS WILL BE RETAINED?

UNLESS WE CONSCIOUSLY PREPARE TO BUILD FOR THE NEAR FUTURE, THE MOVEMENT TODAY WHICH IS NOT SOLIDIFIED ON A CLEAR CONCEPT SUFFERS THE INHERENT POSSIBILITY THAT THE OPPRESSED CHICANO WILL EMERGE TO DEVELOP THE SAME FEATURES AND CHARACTERISTICS

OF THE OPPRESSOR--THE GRINGO. WHAT THEN IS TO BE THE BASIS AND GUIDING FORCE TOWARD ESTABLISHING THE CHICANO IN A RIGHTFULL PLACE IN THE SOCIETY IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES? WHAT THEN, WILL BE THE BASIS FOR THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT WHICH WILL KEEP US FROM, IN TURN, OPPRESSING OTHER PEOPLE AS WE HAVE BEEN OPPRESSED OR FORGOTTEN BY THE CURRENT "DEMOCRATIC" PROCESS? WILL THE ECONOMIC MOVEMENT BE DESIGNED TO TAKE A PIECE OF THE EXISTING ECONOMIC PIE SO THAT THE "MOVIMIENTO" BECOMES BASICALLY A "MOVIDA?" AND WHAT WILL WE LEARN AND TEACH DIFFERENTLY IN A CHICANO SCHOOL SYSTEM?

PERHAPS THESE ARE UNANSWERABLE OR PREMATURE QUESTIONS AT THIS POINT, ALTHOUGH I DO NOT THINK SO. BUT, AT ANY RATE, WE MUST DEAL WITH THESE ISSUES AT SOME TIME. WE CANNOT HAPHAZZARDLY MOVE TOO MUCH FURTHER WITHOUT ADDRESSING THESE CONCERNS.

THIS PAPER ATTEMPTS TO FOCUS ON A BASIC ISSUE. IN THIS PAPER I PROPOSE THAT: THE CHICANO CULTURAL CONCEPT OF "LA FAMILIA" CONTAINS THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF DIRECTION AND FOUNDATION FOR A TRULY HUMAN WAY OF LIFE WHICH WILL ALLOW PEOPLE TO DO MORE THAN MERELY SURVIVE.

THERE IS A CURRENT SAYING IN OUR BARRIOS WHICH GOES, "POBRE DEL CHICANO, TAN LEJOS DE DIOS Y TAN CERCA DEL SYSTEMA DEL GRINGO." (POOR CHICANO, SO FAR FROM GOD AND SO CLOSE TO THE GRINGO.)

THE TRUTH OF THE THOUGHT LINGERS LONG AFTER IT IS READ. THE OPPRESSED CONDITIONS IN WHICH OUR PEOPLE FIND THEMSELVES POLITICALLY, SOCIALLY, ECONOMICALLY, AND MENTALLY, HAVE A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP TO OUR DEALINGS WITH A SYSTEM FOREIGN TO OUR CULTURAL WAY OF LIFE.

IN THE HEAT CAUSED BY THE FRICTION OF CHANGE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY WHERE THE ANGLO IS FRANTICALLY SEARCHING FOR A NEW WAY OF LIFE, CHICANOS ARE CAUGHT IN THE VACUUM AND, AS A RESULT, MANY OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CONFUSED INTO THINKING THAT THE IDENTITY AND CULTURAL CRISIS OF THE ANGLO IS OUR PERSONAL CRISIS ALSO. THIS IS NOT SO!

TOFFLER IS NOT SPEAKING FOR US WHEN HE IS TALKING ABOUT THE "FRACTURED FAMILY" OR THE "STREAMLINED FAMILY" OR THE

"Bio or Professional Family" of the future that he writes about in Future Shock. He is giving a Gringo perspective of his own disintegrating society at the hands of a runaway technology and he wants us to share his paranoia, his Gringo fantasies, his Gringo perspective of our lives and values even though he knows nothing about us.

The Familia is therapy for enduring in an insane society. With a wet kiss on the cheek, a three-year-old daughter can begin to relieve the pressures of the day. A continued insistance to perform her new trick breaks the tension of the day's labor. And with a persistent innocence of sitting on your lap and looking straight into your eyes, can make the outside world disappear.

One Chicano spoke of la Familia: "Our home was like a mighty rock in a stormy sea. It was fun to swim and fight the waves. It was also fun to return to the rock. It was a remarkable rock. It could even reach out and pluck you from the sea as you were going down."

ONE IS NOT ALWAYS CONSCIOUSLY AWARE OF THE NOURISHMENT THAT WE GET FROM THE FAMILIA, BUT ALWAYS THERE IS A DEFINITE VOID WHEN THESE SMALL THINGS ARE MISSING. WE HAVE NOT GIVEN UP THESE THINGS NOR DO WE NEED TO FOR TOFFLER, OR LUNDBERG, WHO IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE FAMILY IS "NEAR THE POINT OF EXTINCTION," OR WOLF WHO SAYS, "THE FAMILY IS DEAD EXCEPT FOR THE FIRST YEAR OR TWO OF CHILD RAISING."

DESPITE THE SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL, AND BIOLOGICAL NEEDS THAT THE FAMILIA HAS PROVIDED FOR THE PEOPLE OF "LA RAZA," MUCH HAS BEEN DONE TO GET US TO DROP OUR FAMILIA VALUES AND TO ABSORB INTO "AMERICAN MAINSTREAM;" TO ACCULTURATE. OUR FAMILIA TIES ARE BLAMED FOR THE "FACT" THAT WE ARE CONFUSED AS TO WHICH WAY TO GO IN WHITE SOCIETY, AS WILLIAM MADSON INDICATES IN HIS BOOK, THE MEXICAN AMERICANS OF SOUTHWEST TEXAS. MADSON SAYS CHICANOS HAVE "LACK OF GOAL ORIENTATION" AND BLAMES THIS ON THE FAMILY WAY OF LIFE. CECILIA HELLER WRITES IN MEXICAN YOUTH; "THE KIND OF SOCIALIZATION THAT MEXICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN GENERALLY RECEIVE AT HOME IS NOT CONDUCIVE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAPACITIES NEEDED FOR

ADVANCEMENT...."

THE FAMILIA STRUCTURE IN WHICH THE MAN OF THE HOUSE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WELL BEING OF THAT FAMILIA HAS BEEN ATTACKED BECAUSE OF A SUPPOSED CONTRIBUTION TO A CULTURE OF DEPENDENCY, INFERIORITY AND INABILITY TO DEAL WITH AUTHORITY.

AGAIN AND AGAIN JUDGMENTS AND EVALUATIONS, "SCHOLARLY" STUDIES OF OUR "RAZA" HAVE BEEN DONE BY PEOPLE WHO ARE OUTSIDE OF OUR CULTURE AND, THEREFORE, WHOSE PREMISES AND CONCLUSIONS AND PREDETERMINED AND JUDGED IN COMPARISON TO WHITE VALUES AND WHITE PERSPECTIVES OF WHAT IS SUCCESSFUL AND WHAT IS DESIRABLE--IN WHITE SOCIETY.

THOSE ATTITUDES AND PRECONCEPTIONS AND FAULTY STUDIES ARE USED AGAINST MANY OF OUR PEOPLE. IF THEY BUY THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, TOO OFTEN THEY WILL BUY THE FALLACY THAT WHAT IS PRINTED MUST BE TRUE (OTHERWISE IT COULD NOT BE PRINTED), AND THEREFORE THEY READ THE BOOKS ABOUT THEMSELVES AND BECAUSE THE FACTS OF CONDITIONS AND WAY OF LIFE SOUND FAMILIAR, THEY BUY THE CONCLUSIONS.

In fact, our Familia has provided the ever constant, ever dependable surety for sons and daughters who have wandered or lost their way. When he or she is through exploring, experimenting, carousing, punishing people, or is broken by life, he can always step back into his home and the home of his family to be greeted by his mother who asks, "Have you eaten?" or the father who commands, "Do you have a place to sleep?"

And, if after gathering nourishment and confidence and strength, he decides to try again "outside," he receives the benediction of the grandmother as he leaves.

Should it happen that fights or arguments take place before he leaves, they are tempered by an atmosphere of respect and dignity which leaves the door open for a return.

What I am saying, of course, must be qualified by recognizing exceptions, but it still stands that the traditional cultural concept of "La Familia" has been a stabilizing element in the lives of the Chicanos. It has been the stench of decay of the Anglo way of life which has affected our lives so much,

THAT HAS INFECTED SO MANY OF OUR PEOPLE TO THE POINT THAT THEY MAY BELIEVE THEY CANNOT GO HOME AGAIN (TOM WOLFE, WHO WROTE YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN COULD NOT HAVE BEEN A CHICANO). WE HAVE BEEN AFFECTED AND CONFUSED TO THE POINT WHERE WE BECOME HIPPIES, CONTRIBUTE TO THE DRUG CULT, EMBRACE "LIBERAL" ISSUES SUCH AS POLLUTION, BIRTH CONTROL, OR ECOLOGY AS OUR ISSUES.

WHILE NO SYSTEM EXISTS WITHOUT SOME NEGATIVE ASPECTS, AND THE SKEPTICS CAN EASILY MAKE GREAT ISSUES OUT OF THE FLAWS, THE FACT REMAINS THAT THERE IS NOWHERE ELSE WE CAN COMFORTABLY TURN TO FOR A HUMANISTIC LIFE.

THE GIVING, THE SHARING, THE BUILDING TOGETHER, THE TOLERANCE OR INTOLERABLE ACTIONS, THE FAITH, THE SPIRIT OF THE FAMILIA ARE DRAWING FORCES WHICH WE CANNOT EASILY TURN OUR BACKS ON. THEY ARE NATURAL THINGS, A PART OF US ALREADY. THEY ARE NOT THOUGHT UP AND FORCED, SUCH AS THE HIPPIE MOVEMENT FORCED THE LOVE "THING" TO A POINT THAT IT GENERATED HATE AND THEN WAS BURIED IN THE CLOUD OF DRUGS, AND IS NOW TRYING TO RESURRECT ITSELF IN THE "JESUS FREAK" MOVEMENT.

WE LIVE AT A TIME WHEN THE ANGLO DOMINATED SYSTEM IS BEING CHALLENGED FROM EVERY LEVEL AND ITS VULNERABILITY IS OBVIOUS. THE ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY OF FREE ENTERPRISE IS CRACKING, THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE, HEAVY WITH RACIAL HATRED IS CAVING IN, POLITICALLY IT IS BEING SLOWLY NEUTRALIZED BY EMERGING NATIONS, SUCH AS IN LATIN AMERICA. EVERYONE IS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING MORE STABLE. THE ANGLO FOR A NEW WAY OF LIFE. THE BLACK IS STRUGGLING TO BUILD PRIDE IN BLACKNESS AND A CULTURAL IDENTITY BY TRYING TO REVIVE WHATEVER CULTURAL TRAITS THEY CAN IDENTIFY. THE INDIAN STILL FIGHTS FOR MERE SURVIVAL, THE ITALIAN-AMERICANS ALSO WANT CULTURAL RECOGNITION. THE JEW IS ASSERTING HIS CULTURAL PAST.

WITHIN THIS PICTURE, THE CHICANO IS PERHAPS IN A MUCH MORE STABLE SITUATION. CHICANO VALUES, CUSTOMS, LIFE-STYLES, LANGUAGE, ARE STILL VERY MUCH A PART OF OUR FAMILIA.

OUR FAMILIA HAS SHELTERED MANY OF OUR CULTURAL TRAITS WHICH A FOREIGN SYSTEM, NOW DETERIORATING WOULD STILL TRY TO BREAK DOWN.

THE FAMILIA VALUES OF COOPERATION, UNITY, RESPECT, DIGNITY AND HONOR OF INDIVIDUALS WHICH ARE TRADITIONAL, ARE THE FORCES OF "LA RAZA" TODAY.

THESE ATTRIBUTES HAVE ALWAYS CAUSED US PROBLEMS IN DEALING WITH THE ANGLO WHO HAS CONFUSED OUR HUMILITY FOR FEAR, OUR COURTESY FOR WEAKNESS, OUR RESPECT FOR INFERIORITY. YET, WE HAVE ENDURED AND WE ARE PREVAILING.

II
LA FAMILIA AND THE DIGNITY OF MAN

IN A WORLD WHERE THE CHICANO HAS BEEN PUNISHED FOR USING HIS NATIVE LANGUAGE, HAS BEEN RIDICULED FOR HIS CUSTOMS, LIED TO ABOUT HIS HISTORY, HAD HIS VALUES SUPPRESSED AND BEEN KEPT ECONOMICALLY ENSLAVED, THE ONLY THING LEFT TO HIM WAS HIS FAMILY AND HIS DIGNITY. CORKY GONZALES EXPRESSES IT IN I AM JOAQUIN, THUSLY:

YES,

I HAVE COME A LONG WAY TO NOWHERE,

UNWILLINGLY DRAGGED BY THAT

MONSTROUS, TECHNICAL

INDUSTRIAL GIANT CALLED

P R O G R E S S

AND ANGLO SUCCESS...

I WATCH MY BROTHERS,

I SHED TEARS OF SORROW.

I SOW SEEDS OF HATE.

I WITHDRAW TO THE SAFETY WITHIN THE

CIRCLE OF LIFE...

M Y O W N P E O P L E.

WITHIN THE FAMILY OF THAT PEOPLE, A DIGNITY AND PRIDE OF HUMAN WORTH GREW AND WAS NOURISHED. THIS DIGNITY AND PRIDE EXHIBITS ITSELF TODAY IN WHAT IS KNOWN AS "MACHISMO." THIS MACHISMO IS GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO MEN, BUT IT IS ALSO EXHIBITED BY THE WOMEN OF LA RAZA. ONE CAN SEE IT EASILY IN CHICANA WOMEN WHO ARE ALONE WITH THEIR CHILDREN. THIS DIGNITY AND PRIDE IS MANIFESTED BY THE WAY THE WOMAN CARRIES HERSELF DESPITE HUMILIATION IN A WELFARE LINE, OR DEFENDING HER CHILDREN FROM A RACIST SCHOOL PRINCIPAL WHO

STILL PUNISHES CHICANO CHILDREN FOR USING THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS; OR FIGHTING TO STAY ALIVE IN A COUNTRY WHERE IT IS A SIN TO BE A WOMAN, TO BE A WOMAN ALONE, TO BE A WOMAN ALONE WITH CHILDREN, TO BE A CHICANA WOMAN ALONE WITH CHILDREN. THERE IS A CLEANSING, REFRESHING PRESENCE WHICH IS UNDENIABLE IN CHICANA WOMEN.

THE ULTIMATE MANIFESTATION OF THIS MACHISMO WHICH BOTH OUR WOMEN AND MEN HAVE IS EXHIBITED IN THE CONCERN AND DEFENSE OF THE FAMILY AT ALL COSTS. PROTECTION AND DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY AT ALL COSTS IS THE TEST FOR ACCEPTANCE AND RESPECT IN HIS COMMUNITY.

THE FAMILIA TIES BONDS THAT DEMAND DEFENSE AND PROTECTION HAVE BEEN TRADITIONAL. THEY ARE EXHIBITED IN THE SCHOOL YARD BY A BROTHER WHO SEEKS OUT ANOTHER BROTHER "PARA HACERME ESQUINA," (TO BACK HIM UP). FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE DIGNITY OF THE MOTHER AND THE SISTER, PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SHOT, MAIMED AND BEATEN. ONE MUST BE CAREFUL WHEN TALKING OF ANOTHER'S SISTER, WIFE, MOTHER. ONE IS JUDGED HARSHLY ON THE MANNER

IN WHICH HE CARES FOR HIS FAMILY.

REIS LOPEZ TIJERINA SPOKE OF THE POWER OF THE FAMILIA. HE COMPARED A CHICKEN WHICH ENCOUNTERS A DOG OR A SNAKE. THE CHICKEN WILL SQUAWK, RUN AROUND, MAKE A FUSS AND FINALLY FLEE FOR SAFETY. NOW WATCH A "GALINA CULECA" (A HEN WITH CHICKS) IN THE SAME SITUATION. SHE WILL HISS, FLUFF OUT HER FEATHERS, STRETCH HER NECK AND ATTACK THE THREAT TO HER FAMILY. THE SNAKE AND THE DOG WHO ARE WISE WILL MOVE ON.

THE "BLOOD" OF LA FAMILIA IS A BINDING ONE AND ENCOUNTERS TO DEFEND THE MEMBERS OF THAT FAMILY HAVE SELDOM WAVERED.

III

PERSPECTIVES OF LIFE/DEATH

RAZA AS A RULE DO NOT COMMIT SUICIDE. THE SUICIDE RATE AMONG THE ANGLO WILL ALWAYS BE HIGHER THAN CHICANOS BECAUSE THE ANGLO PLACES VALUE ON THINGS ABOVE LIFE. MATERIAL THINGS, MONEY, SOCIAL STATUS SEEM TO BE MORE IMPORTANT TO HIM THAN LIFE. (AT THIS POINT I OPENLY ADMIT A BIAS. I LOOK AT THE ANGLO FROM A CHICANO PERSPECTIVE, OR AT LEAST A NON-ANGLO

VIEW. MY JUDGMENT IS TAKEN FROM WHAT I HAVE SEEN AND READ AND KNOW FROM LIVING AMONG THE ANGLO.)

THERE IS A CARTOON OF A MAN BEING HELD UP BY A ROBBER AND THE DIALOGUE GOES SOMETHING LIKE;

ROBBER: "YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE"

ANGLO VICTIM: "TAKE MY LIFE, I NEED MY MONEY"

THE CARTOON HAS MORE THAN COMICAL DIMENSIONS. WHEN THE ANGLO CANNOT SATISFY HIS MATERIAL DESIRES OR MAINTAIN A GIVEN STATUS, LIFE HAS LITTLE VALUE AND CAN COMMIT SUICIDE MORE READILY. THIS IS WHY DURING THE STOCK MARKET CRASH OF THE "30's" PEOPLE COULD THROW THEMSELVES OUT OF APARTMENT WINDOWS.

THE CHICANO PERSPECTIVE AND VALUE OF LIFE ARE CLEARLY DIFFERENT. THE MOST DRAMATIC EXAMPLE IS FOUND IN THE TRADITIONAL BULLFIGHT.

THE BULLFIGHT IS A RITUAL, NOT A SPORT. (MOST ANGLOS DO NOT UNDERSTAND OR APPRECIATE THE DIFFERENCE. THE COMMON CRY IS A PARADOXICAL POSITION WHICH PROTESTS CRUELTY TO ANIMALS YET THINK NOTHING OF THE PHYSICAL OR SPIRITUAL CRUELTY

THEY INFLICT EVERYDAY ON RAZA IN THEIR LOCAL SWEATSHOPS AND FIELDS OR IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.)

THE BULLFIGHT IS A RITUAL CEREMONY IN WHICH THE "TORERO" MAN ENTERS THE RING TO ENCOUNTER WITH THE FORCES OF LIFE REPRESENTED BY THE BEAST, BULL.

THE BULL IS STRONG, POTENT, MAJESTIC AND CARRIES THE DARK FORCES OF DESTRUCTION. HE IS RULER OF THE LAND AND ALL THOSE WHO CHALLENGE HIM MUST BE PREPARED TO PAY.

THE TORERO, ARROGANT, BRAVE, FLASHY IN HIS SUIT OF LIGHTS PREPARES HIMSELF FOR THE CHALLENGE. THAT AFTERNOON AS THE SUN BEGINS TO DESCENT FROM ITS HIGHEST PEAK AND THE SHADOWS OF THE DAY BEGIN TO SPREAD, THE TORERO, MAN PREPARES HIMSELF FOR A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH. THAT ENCOUNTER IS THE RITUAL; THE CEREMONY TO WHICH THE AFICIONADO (THE SPECTATOR WHO IS ALSO A SEMI-PARTICIPANT) SITS IN JUDGMENT.

MANS ENCOUNTER WITH DEATH IS THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THE BULLFIGHT. AND, IT IS THE MANNER IN WHICH DEATH IS FACED

THAT IS THE JUDGMENT OF THE CEREMONY.

DEATH IS THE ONLY CERTAINTY IN THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN THE BULL AND THE MAN, AND THE KEY REASON FOR THE BULLFIGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE IS THE PERFORMANCE OF MAN AND BEAST IN THE FACE OF DEATH.

THE MAN IS JUDGED IN THIS ENCOUNTER WITH DEATH. IF HE IS BRAVE HE IS APPLAUDED. IF HE HAS POISE AND DIGNITY AS HE INTERACTS WITH THE FORCES THE BULL REPRESENTS, HE IS APPLAUDED.

IF AT THE MOMENT OF TRUTH, THAT INSTANT IN WHICH DEATH RUSHES TO MEET WITH MAN, HE SHOWS POISE, STYLE HE IS EMBRACED BY THE PEOPLE. HOWEVER, IF HE BEHAVES SLOPPY, IF HE PULLS AWAY FROM THE BULL, IF HE MISTREATS THE BULL UNNECESSARILY, HE IS BOOED AND WILL DINE ALONE.

ONE THEN IS JUDGED FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH HE FACES LIFE AND BEHAVES IN THE FACE OF DEATH. THIS PHILOSOPHY IS CARRIED ON IN EVERYDAY LIFE OF RAZA.

LA RAZA IS MORE BLATANT IN ITS ATTITUDES TOWARD DEATH.

THEY EVEN DESIGNATE A HOLIDAY IN WHICH DEATH IS SPECIAL GUEST. DURING THIS HOLIDAY, "EL DIA DE LOS MUERTOS," (DAY OF THE DEAD) THE PEOPLE DON SKELETON SUITS AND MASKS OF DEATH AND CELEBRATE MERRILY. THEY DANCE AND SING AND DRINK AND EAT CANDIES MADE IN THE FORM OF SKULLS, AS IF IN DEFIANCE OF THE INEVITABLE AND ULTIMATE ACT ALL MUST PERFORM ON EARTH.

RAZA PRIZES LIFE AND RESPECTS IT BUT CHALLENGES IT FOR THEIR EXISTENCE EACH DAY. THEY TAKE PRIDE IN THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ENCOUNTER WITH THE FORCES OF LIFE AND THEIR VERY EXISTENCE TODAY IS TESTIMONY TO THE STRENGTH OF THE PEOPLE. NO, RAZA WILL NEVER DIE AS A SUICIDE VICTIM. THEY MAY ENDURE BUT WILL NEVER SUBMIT. IT IS NOT THEIR NATURE.

IV

LA FAMILIA AND THE CHICANO MOVEMENT

THE CHICANO MOVEMENT TODAY IS BEING CHARGED BY A REBIRTH OF THE CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES OF OUR PARENTS. WE ARE REEMBRACING THE THINGS THAT ONCE MADE US ASHAMED IN WHITE SOCIETY. OUR LANGUAGE, OUR MUSIC, OUR COLOR, OUR FOOD, AND ALSO OUR HUMANISTIC VALUES.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TOMORROW'S MOVEMENT WILL NOT BE ENTIRELY AS BEFORE. THIS IS ONLY RIGHT. WE LIVE IN A CHANGING WORLD. THERE ARE ASPECTS OF OUR PARENT'S WORLD WHICH MAY NOT FIT TODAY (I.E., MALE AND FEMALE ROLES) BUT CERTAINLY OUR EMERGING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND PHILOSOPHY WILL NOT GIVE UP THOSE ELEMENTS THAT HAVE KEPT US ALIVE TILL NOW. THE CHICANO MOVEMENT TODAY DOES NOT NEED TO LOOK TO REVOLUTIONARY MODELS NOR RADICAL CHANGES AND PHILOSOPHIES FOR A HUMANISTIC WAY OF LIFE. FOR A LIFE FREE OF RACIAL EXPLOITATION, FREE OF POLLUTION IN GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, AND OUR ENVIRONMENT, WE ONLY NEED TO LOOK WITHIN OURSELVES.

WHILE IT IS A DEADLY MISTAKE TO ASSUME THAT TO BE A GOOD CHICANO MEANS TO BE POOR, THERE ARE SOME VALID REASONS TO LOOK AT THE BARRIO LIFE FOR DIRECTION. THE BARRIO PRODUCED A WAY OF LIFE WHICH WAS ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL IN THE MIDST OF AN ANGLO SYSTEM THAT DID NOT UNDERSTAND OR TOLERATE EXISTING DIFFERENCES. THE BARRIO GENERATED THE CONCEPT OF LA FAMILIA WHICH IN MOST CASES WAS AND IS MANIFESTED IN SUBTLE WAYS.

A FRIEND TOLD ME ABOUT HIS FATHER WHEN THEIR FAMILY WAS YOUNG. THINGS WERE NOT GOING WELL AND THERE WAS LITTLE MONEY IN THE HOUSE. BUT EVERY SUNDAY THE WHOLE FAMILY WOULD SIT DOWN AT THE DINNER TABLE TO EAT CHICKEN; THE ONLY MEAT FOR THE WEEK.

"MY FATHER ALWAYS ATE THE CHICKEN NECKS. HE ALWAYS TALKED OF HOW GOOD THEY WERE AND HE ALWAYS GOT THE NECKS. I THOUGHT NOTHING OF IT AT THE TIME. IF HE SAID HE LIKED THE NECK, I WAS CONTENT AND FREE TO GO GREEDILY AFTER THE BREAST OF THE CHICKEN. TEN YEARS LATER I LEARNED MY FATHER LIKED THE BREAST OF CHICKEN ALSO. BUT FOR THOSE SUNDAYS AND ALL THOSE YEARS, HE PURPOSELY LEFT THE BEST MEAT FOR US AND TOOK THE NECKS... INSTANTLY, I LEARNED A POWERFUL LESSON OF THE FAMILY AND MY RESPECT FOR THE MAN INTENSIFIED, THOUGH TO THIS DAY I HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT IT, NOR DO I THINK IT IS NECESSARY. IT WOULD ONLY EMBARRASS US BOTH."

THE BARRIO GENERATED THE RAZA CONCEPT OF LA FAMILIA WHICH ENGULFED NOT ONLY THE IMMEDIATE "BLOOD" FAMILY BUT ALSO THE

RAZA COMMUNITY AS A FAMILY.

AROUND THE FAMILIA GREW CONCEPTS OF CARNALIZMO, CHICANIZMO, COMPADRAZGO (CO-PARENTHOOD OR EXTENDED FAMILY) AND THE STABILIZING FORCE OF THE FAMILIA, THE LAND.

THE FAMILIA CONCEPT MAY HAVE BEEN THE OUTGROWTH OF RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE AS WELL AS THE SHIELD AGAINST OPPRESSIVE ELEMENTS (I.E., ECONOMIC, SOCIAL OPPRESSION) BUT IT HAS LONG SINCE BEEN A CULTURAL TRAIT WHICH DICTATES THAT NO MATTER HOW POOR YOU ARE, IF SOMEONE IS HUNGRY, YOU SHARE WHAT LITTLE YOU HAVE.

THIS CONCEPT CONCERNS ITSELF WITH THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE, RELATIVES AND NEIGHBORS ALIKE. IF SOMEONE IS SICK, ONE MIGHT BRING A PLATE OF HOT SOUP, SOME FRUIT, YOU MIGHT CLEAN THE HOUSE, MAKE FOOD FOR THE CHILDREN, TAKE THE CHILDREN TO SLEEP IN YOUR HOME AND PROVIDE COMPANY. NONE OF THIS IS DONE THROUGH AN ORGANIZATION, OR WITH A CHARITY PERSPECTIVE. IT IS DONE BECAUSE IT IS COMMANDED BY THE LAWS OF HUMAN DECENCY. AND NO ONE GOES HOME TO COUNT WHAT THEY GAVE, OR PRESENT A BILL.

FROM THE CONCEPT OF LA FAMILIA GREW A TERM COMMON IN THE

MOVEMENT TODAY; CARNAL OR CARNALIZMO. A CARNAL IS BROTHER, A BROTHER IN THE CLOSEST SENSE. A CARNAL SHARES THE COMMON EXPERIENCE OF BEING AN OPPRESSED HUMAN BEING IN THE PARLOR OF THE RICHEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD; OF BEING SLIGHTED BY ANGLOS BECAUSE HE IS SOMETIMES DARK-SKINNED; OF BEING MADE TO FEEL ASHAMED BY THE ANGLO BECAUSE HE SPEAKS WITH AN ACCENT. CARNALES HAVE KNOWN HUNGER, THEY HAVE BEEN SO DOWN THAT THE ONLY THINGS THAT KEEP THEM ALIVE IS EL "ORGULLO" (A STUBBORN PRIDE). A CARNAL KNOWS ALIENATION, THE ANGUISH OF BEING TAGGED MENTALLY RETARDED BECAUSE HE DOESN'T RELATE AND RESPOND TO GRINGO IMAGES AND VALUES. A CARNAL SHARES AND KNOWS THE HUMILIATION OF HAVING HIS LIFE UNDRESSED BY A PRETTY SMILING SOCIAL WORKER IN ORDER TO CLOTHE HIS FAMILY.

BUT A CARNAL ALSO KNOWS THE RELEASE OF "UN GRITO," A CHICANO YELL AT PACHANGAS, OF THE LIVELINESS OF DANCING RANCHERA, OF DRINKING COOL WATER FROM A BURLAP WRAPPED GALLON JUG, OF SINGING LAS MANANITAS TO SOMEONE CLOSE, OF THE TENDERNESS OF PLAY WITH THE FAMILY, OF KNOWING PRIDE AND HUMAN DIGNITY. MANY UNSPOKEN EXPERIENCES SHARED UNKNOWINGLY, HAVE MADE CARNALES A

CLOSE FAMILIA OF CHICANOS THAT HAS ENDURED AND SURVIVED 125 YEARS OF OPPRESSION AT THE HANDS OF A GRINGO SYSTEM.

THOSE EXPERIENCES ARE THE FORCE OF THE CHICANO MOVEMENT TODAY. AND, IF NOT ALL PEOPLE EXHIBIT THOSE QUALITIES OF FAMILIA; IF THERE ARE POLITICOS THAT SOMETIMES USE OUR PEOPLE; IF THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO PREY ON THE FAILINGS OF OTHER PEOPLE; THEY ARE STILL PART OF THE FAMILIA, BECAUSE THE FAMILIA IS NOT ALL GOOD AS IT IS NOT ALL BAD. WE HAVE MANY "PERDIDOS;" (LOST ONES). PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT COME HOME YET. THEY OFTEN ARE KNOWN AS SELLOUTS, VENDIDOS, TIO TACOS, ETC. MAINLY THEY ARE PERDIDOS, MANY OF WHICH ARE FINDING THEIR WAYS HOME MORE EASILY NOW BECAUSE THEY ARE DISCOVERING THAT TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF THEIR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IS TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF THEIR PARENTS. IF THEY DENY THEIR PARENTS, THEY CAN NEVER ESTABLISH A TRUE IDENTITY WITH A PEACE OF MIND. THEY CAN ONLY BE WALKING DEAD. THE TEMPTATIONS OF MATERIAL GAIN AND ANGLO ACCEPTANCE IS NO LONGER WORTH IT, NOR NECESSARY.

THE COMPADRE EXTENDS THE FAMILIA CONCEPT. THROUGH THE

CHILDREN, THE OLDER PEOPLE SOLIDIFY THE FAMILIA AND PROMOTE HUMAN RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG THE COMMUNITY. THIS CONCEPT ALSO MAKES THE TOTAL BARRIO A FAMILIA, A NETWORK OF INTER-RELATED FAMILIA TIES. ANY BARRIO TODAY THAT HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETELY DISORIENTED BY THE URBANIZATION PROCESS, EXHIBITS FAMILIA QUALITIES. A PADRINO LOOKS CLOSELY AFTER THE WELFARE OF THE "AHIJADO" (GODSON), HE SUPERVISES, HE COUNSELS, HE DISCIPLINES, HE CLOTHES HIM WHEN POSSIBLE. THE PADRINO-AHIJADO-COMPADRE RELATIONSHIP IS AN ALMOST SACRED RELATIONSHIP. A VISITOR IN THESE HOMES WILL ALWAYS BE OFFERED SOME NOURISHMENT EVEN IF HE IS A STRANGER--SOME COFFEE, AN INVITATION TO DINNER, AT THE VERY LEAST, SOME WATER TO DRINK. THIS FROM THE POOREST HOMES. THE LESS ONE HAS, THE MORE THEY OFFER AND GIVE. TO REFUSE THE OFFERING IS TO INSULT THE DIGNITY OF THE HOME. IT SEEMS THAT THE LESS ONE OWNS, THE LESS VALUE MATERIAL THINGS HAVE, AND THE MORE EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON CONCERN FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S COMFORTS

THE ROLE OF SELF RESPECT AND THE RESPECT FOR OTHERS IS THE HUMANIZING INGREDIENT. THERE IS A SAYING THAT GOES: "RESPECT

FOR OTHERS AND THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS IS THE BASIS FOR PEACE." THIS RESPECT IS A KEY AND CONSCIOUSLY BUILT INGREDIENT. CHILDREN SHOW RESPECT FOR THEIR PARENTS AND THEIR ELDERS, PARENTS RESPECT THE GUIDANCE AND INPUT OF THEIR PARENTS. THEY ADDRESS THEM FORMALLY WITH "USTED" INSTEAD OF "TU" A MORE FAMILIAR AND PRESUMPTUOUS TERM. THE ANGLO WITH HIS ENGLISH LANGUAGE DOES NOT MAKE A DISTINCTION WHEN TALKING ABOUT YOU, HIM, THEM, HER. IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY OF ADDRESSING AND IT NEITHER IMPLIES NOR CONNOTATES RESPECT. IT MERELY IDENTIFIES A COLD, STERILE OR IMPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP.

IN THE CHICANO TRADITION, ALL PEOPLE ARE ADDRESSED WITH THIS RESPECT. A FORMALITY WHICH MAY NOT MEAN MUCH TO SOMEONE OUTSIDE THE CULTURE, YET A WAY OF LIFE FOR CHICANOS.

V

FAMILIA VS CHALLENGE TO AUTHORITY

THERE NEED NOT BE A CONTRADICTION BETWEEN RESPECT FOR PEOPLE AND THE CHALLENGE TO AUTHORITY ELDERS HAVE GAINED THROUGH AGE AND EXPERIENCE, OR TO ANY AUTHORITY. THERE IS DEFINITELY

A CHALLENGE TO MAKE AUTHORITY RELEVANT TO PRESENT REALITIES. IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD ONE MUST ENCOUNTER THOSE ELEMENTS OF CHANGE. WE SERVE NO ONE IF WE BECOME RIGID IN NOT ADAPTING TO CHANGE. THE CULTURAL ASPECT THAT COMMANDS RESPECT DOES NOT MEAN AUTHORITY IS ABSOLUTE, ESPECIALLY IN A CHANGING WORLD, BUT RESPECT NEED NEVER BE ABSENT FROM ANY RELATIONSHIP.

VI

LA TIERRA SAGRADA

THE OTHER ELEMENT THAT PLAYS AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE LIFE OF THE CHICANO FAMILY IN THE BARRIO IS THE CONCEPT OF TERRITORY OR LAND. IT IS IN KEEPING A RELATIONSHIP TO NATURE OR LIVING WITH THE LAND INSTEAD OF TRYING TO EXPLOIT IT. FOR THE FAMILIA, IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A SMALL PIECE OF LAND THAT IT CAN GRASP. IT SEEMS TO BE THE STABILIZING ELEMENT FOR THE FAMILIA, THAT IN TURN PROVIDES THE STABILIZING FORCE FOR THE PEOPLE. PEOPLE OFTEN TALK OF THEIR "PEDASO DE TIERRITA." THEY SPEAK OF THE LAND WITH GENTLENESS, THE LAND IS REFERRED TO AS "LA TIERRA SAGRADA" (SACRED EARTH) AND, ON THIS TIERRITA, THE ROOTS OF THE FAMILIA DROPS ITS SEEDS AND GROWS, EXPANDS

AND TAKES NOURISHMENT FROM THE TIERRA AND THE PLANT OF LIFE, THE FAMILIA. THIS IS WHERE THE FAMILY GROWS AND CULTIVATES HUMAN RESPECT. THERE, MORE VALUE IS PLACED ON THE LIVING OF A LIFE WITH DIGNITY AND MAINTAINING THE HONOR OF THE FAMILY THAN ON MATERIAL GAIN. IF A SON EXHIBITS QUALITIES OF RESPECT, HE IS SAID TO BE FROM "BUENA MATA" (A GOOD PLANT), HE HAS BEEN RAISED WELL. THE LAND IS WORKED WHEN POSSIBLE, AND THE HARVEST OF THE LAND REWARDS THE FAMILY SPIRITUALLY AS WELL AS PSYCHOLOGICALLY. THE TIERRA STABILIZES THE FAMILIA IN THE SAME WAY THAT ONE WHO IS INTOXICATED AND FEELS THE WORLD SPINNING AWAY FROM HIM SEARCHES FOR THE GROUND TO STABILIZE HIMSELF. WITHOUT THE EARTH, IT SEEMS CERTAIN THAT ONE WILL FLOAT AWAY AND BECOME LOST TO LIFE.

THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND AND TO THE FAMILY IS A GOOD WAY TO IDENTIFYING THE SOCIETY IN WHICH WE LIVE. AS FAMILIES ARE, SO IS SOCIETY AND THE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LAND PREDICT SALVATION OR DESTRUCTION OF A NATION. A LOOK AT WHITE SOCIETY TODAY CAN GIVE US A GOOD INDICATION OF WHAT CHICANOS MIGHT BECOME IF THEY WANT TO BUY INTO THE WAY OF LIFE OF THE ANGLO.

WHAT BEGAN AS THE MANIFEST DESTINY MENTALITY, AND THE PROTESTANT ETHIC, AT ONE TIME ALSO PROJECTED THE IDEALS OF FAMILY LIVING ALONG WITH A DECENT AND DESIRABLE ECONOMIC WAY OF LIFE. BUT THE IDEAL OF THAT MODEST GOAL HAS BEEN SWALLOWED UP BY THE MONSTER SYSTEM OF CONSUMERSHIP WHICH DEMANDS MORE FOOD (BUT NOT NECESSARILY MORE NUTRITIOUS), MORE PRODUCTION (BUT NOT NECESSARILY MORE QUALITY), FASTER CARS (BUT NOT NECESSARILY SAFER CARS), MORE AND BIGGER BOMBS (JUST AS DESTRUCTIVE), WARS (NOT MORE PRODUCTIVE BUT PROFITABLE). SUPER INDUSTRIALISM HAS TAKEN OVER AND THE PEOPLE INVOLVED HAVE LITTLE CHOICE, THEY ARE SWEPT ALONG OR THEY ARE SWEPT UNDER, FEW CAN CONTROL THE PACE OF THAT TECHNOLOGY. MORE PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO COLOR T.V'S. AND TWO CARS AND A STANDARD HOUSE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD, YET THERE IS A FALSE SECURITY AND THERE IS LITTLE PEACE OF MIND.

VII

ANGLO ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LAND

LAND WAS AND IS LOOKED UPON AS HAVING A DOLLAR VALUE. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO PRODUCE FOR MAN. MAN TOOK THE LIBERTY TO SHAPE

IT, TO FERTILIZE, TO SPRAY IT TO MAKE IT PRODUCE AND TO OVER-PRODUCE. LAND WAS TO WORK FOR MAN. EFFICIENCY WAS THE KEY WORD AND AS TECHNOLOGY WAS REFINED, EFFICIENCY WAS IMPROVED AND SOON WE HAD COMPUTERIZED NATURE. CATTLE'S WEIGHT, CHICKEN'S FEED, WHEAT GROWTH WAS COMPUTERIZED BY MACHINE TO GET THE ULTIMATE PRODUCTION. NEW WORDS WERE COINED AND AGRICULTURE BECAME AGRIBUSINESS. A NEW BALANCE OF NATURE, CONTROLLED BY GIANT CORPORATIONS OUT OF A HIGH BUILDING IN NEW YORK. THE TIME TO SELL A COW WAS NOT DETERMINED BY THE FARMER BUT BY A TECHNICIAN A THOUSAND MILES AWAY IN A SUIT WHO FED BITS OF INFORMATION INTO A MACHINE AND PREDETERMINED THAT IN 15 WEEKS THE COW SHOULD WEIGH SO MUCH, THEN IT WAS TIME TO SELL.

IN THE PROCESS OF DOMESTICATING AND COMPUTERIZING NATURE, MAN'S INDIFFERENCE TO THE LAND AND THE DELICATE BALANCE OF NATURE WAS UPSET. THE WATER, THE AIR, AND THE LAND HAVE BEEN POLLUTED. NOW HE IS TRYING TO CORRECT HIS MISTAKES. ECOLOGY IS THE WORD OF THE SEVENTIES. BUT, WITHOUT A COMPLETE CHANGE IN VALUES AND ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LAND, THERE CAN BE LITTLE HOPE FOR IMPROVING THE SITUATION.

VIII

ANGLO ATTITUDE TOWARD FAMILY

As a result of the refined technology, leisure and mobility has become a way of life. Communication and the ease of transportation to make a living for the family, in essence, all but destroyed the (Anglo) family, as Lundberg has stated.

A father could move his family from New York one year, to California for two years, and to Chicago the next year. The family made few lasting friends. Mostly, there were business acquaintences. His family became isolated, independent, liberated. His family has become autonomous units. The home is primarily a base--to sleep, to eat, sometimes. There was the career-minded mother, the sexually free daughter and the rebellious son.

The children have grown up unsatisfied with the higher standards of living created by their parents for their confort. They discard the material things. They want to identify with the Indian--wearing beads and long hair, they started communes

IN THE MOUNTAINS OF NEW MEXICO--BUT THEY DON'T WORK NOW. THEY PUT PATCHES ON THEIR PANTS AND GO BAREFOOT LIKE POOR PEOPLE--STILL, THEY DON'T IDENTIFY WITH POOR PEOPLE. THEY ARE ALIENATED IN THEIR OWN SOCIETY, THEY HAVE NO STABILITY. THEY LOOK BACK FOR SOMETHING TO HOLD ONTO. THERE IS LITTLE THERE. THEIR ROOTS ARE NON-EXISTENT. THEIR FAMILIES HAVE JUST MOVED TO ANOTHER SUBURB FOR A BETTER JOB.

FOR THE ANGLO HIS DYNASTY IS OVER, AND HIS FUTURE IS BLEAK. ONLY THE SKELETON CONTINUES TO EXIST.

THE IMPLICATIONS FOR CHICANOS WILL BE WHAT "LA RAZA" WISHES AND PERMITS THEM TO BE.

IX

CONCLUSION

WE, AS CHICANOS LIVE WITHIN A HARSH REALITY OF AN ANGLO SOCIETY. THE ANGLO HAS LIVED AMONG US FOR MORE THAN 125 YEARS YET HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT US. HE USES ANGLO PERSPECTIVES TO IDENTIFY US AND HIS PERCEPTIONS ARE OUT OF FOCUS. HE USES HIS VALUE SYSTEM TO JUDGE US AND WE DO NOT MEET HIS STANDARDS

OF ACCEPTANCE. HIS FAULTY PERCEPTIONS AND JUDGMENTS HAVE MADE VICTIMS OF OUR PEOPLE AND OUR CULTURE. OUR LANGUAGE, OUR MUSIC, OUR FOOD, AND OUR HISTORY HAVE EITHER BEEN SUPPRESSED, EXPLOITED OR DESTROYED AS A RESULT OF OUR LIVING AMONG HIM.

IT IS TRUE THAT THE ANGLO HAS CREATED A SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY WHICH HAS BROUGHT ABOUT MANY LUXURIES. AMERICA HAS BECOME AN AFFLUENT SOCIETY AND HAS ESTABLISHED A CULTURE OF LEISURE. BUT IN THIS PROCESS THE ANGLO HAS ALSO POLLUTED THE ENVIRONMENT AND ALIENATED HIS CHILDREN.

AS THE MOTTO GOES: "ANGLO AMERICA--MURDER, MADNESS, SEX... AND, THE BEST DAMN ICE CREAM IN THE WORLD."

THE FAMILY OF THE ANGLO HAS ACCURATELY BEEN DESCRIBED AS ALMOST DEAD.

CHICANOS AND OTHER PEOPLES ARE NOW RISING AGAINST THE GRINGO SYSTEM AND DESPITE THE POWERS USED TO SUPPRESS THE PEOPLE AND TO "KEEP THEM IN LINE" THEY WILL OVERCOME. THEY CANNOT FAIL.

If we look at the Chicano historically, we know we are mestizos; a blend of cultures, European and Indian. Both at once--yet neither. We cannot identify with European values, nor totally Indian lifestyles. We are also different from the Mexicans. We are a part of a new people (La Nueva Raza), with an emerging identity and an emerging culture. For too long we have been dormant--in the "Fall", but now we are in the "Primavera", --the "Spring" of our culture.

What we are to become, what we are becoming is influenced, of course, by what is around us. And what is around us is the Gringo system which has constantly attacked and chipped away at our traditional culture.

We live in a rapidly changing world today and we must be prepared to deal with these changes.

Currently, we are involved in a movement of change: "The Chicano Movement." There are political, economic, and educational dimensions to this movement. The attempt is to develop something that will address the Chicano experience.

THERE IS ANOTHER ASPECT TO THE CHICANO MOVEMENT AND THAT IS THE CULTURAL ASPECT OF THE CHICANO. NEW SOUNDS IN MUSIC ARE BEGINNING TO EMERGE. MALO, SANTANA, AZTECA ARE CURRENT GROUPS WHO ARE GIVING DIRECTION TO THAT PHASE OF THE MOVEMENT. IN THE ARTS, A CHICANO EXPRESSION IS BEING MANIFEST IN THE MURAL PAINTINGS WHICH ARE APPEARING THROUGHOUT AZTLAN, FRESNO, SAN FRANCISCO, SANTA FE, SAN ANTONIO, ALBUQUERQUE. THE CHICANO EXPERIENCE IN THE DRAMATIC ARTS IS DISTINCTLY EMERGING IN THE FORM OF DANCE AND TEATROS (THEATRE). TEATRO CAMPESINO IS A LEADING EXAMPLE OF THE COUNTLESS BARRIO THEATRES WITH ITS POIGNANT REFLECTION AND SOCIAL SATIRE OF CHICANO LIFE IN AN ANGLO SOCIETY.

WE ARE GROWING AND MOVING AS A PEOPLE AND WE WILL NOT BE DENIED A PLACE IN THIS COUNTRY. TO THE CONTRARY, WE WILL TRANSFORM THE ANGLO WAY OF LIFE AND IF WE CAN'T THEN WE WILL PERISH TOGETHER. BUT IF WE ARE GOING TO AVOID THE PITFALLS OF THE GRINGO DYNASTY, WE MUST CAREFULLY AND CONSCIOUSLY BE SELECTING THOSE BASIC ELEMENTS WHICH WE WISH TO LIVE WITH. OUR MUSIC, OUR LANGUAGE, OUR FOODS, YES, BUT WHAT ELEMENTS FOR LIVING A

LIFE BASED ON HUMANISTIC VALUES? WE MUST CONSCIOUSLY SELECT AND PROMOTE THOSE ELEMENTS.

I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE CHICANO CULTURAL CONCEPT OF "LA FAMILIA" PROVIDES FOR US A READY-MADE BASE FROM WHICH TO BUILD BOTH OUR EMERGING IDENTITY AND A HUMANISTIC SYSTEM. IDOLIZING PHILOSOPHIES OF CHE, PANCHO VILLA, ZAPATA ARE FOR THE MOMENT, AND THEY SERVE THEIR PURPOSE, BUT FOR THE LASTING AND SANE FOUNDATION FOR A HUMANISTIC WAY OF LIFE, WE MUST LOOK TO OUR "FAMILIA." THE GOALS ARE FOR A FOUNDATION OF BROTHERHOOD, A RESPECT FOR PEOPLE, A DEFENSE OF THE FAMILY THAT KEEPS US SPIRITUALLY ALIVE AND A COMPATIBLE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LAND THAT KEEPS US PHYSICALLY ALIVE.